

Michigan United Conservation Clubs

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Conserving, Enhancing and Protecting Michigan's Natural Resources and Outdoors Heritage since 1937.



May 24, 2012

Senate Committee on Agriculture
Senator Joe Hune, Chair
State Capitol
Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Chairman Hune and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to hear our testimony regarding Senate Bill 996. We are appreciative of the work that has been done thus far to alleviate some of our concerns about indemnification for pets.

As avid supporters of Michigan's outdoors and natural resources, MUCC has some concerns about using natural resources dollars towards indemnification claims for livestock losses due to wolf, coyotes, and cougars. Typically, dollars used for natural resources budget go towards things that sportsmen and women depend on, such as game and fish management, and wildlife disease monitoring and control.

Though the delisting of wolves from the Federal Endangered Species list in January 2012, the nearly year around hunting season and liberal nuisance control policies for coyotes, land owners have more tools and options available to them for predation control than ever. We believe that these tools and other options available to land owners should be considered when looking at claims for indemnification payments.

Furthermore, MUCC feels that any doubled payments stemming from MDARD's failure to make a payment on time should not be subject to reimbursement from the natural resources budget. As the DNR has very little to do with this process and the amount to be paid out, our natural resources dollars should not be punished by an untimely payment.

Thank you for considering our concerns and we are happy to work with you and the bill sponsor to address some of the remaining concerns. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kent R. Wood
Legislative Affairs Manager